

REMARKS

Following amendment, twenty-six total claims (51-57, 59-60, 62-63, 66-70, and 72-81) and three independent claims (51, 66, and 69) remain in this application. It is believed that no new subject matter is being added through these amendments, with new claims 72-83 being virtually identical to existing claims 51-57, 59-60, and 62-65. Applicants wish to express appreciation for the Office action's indication in paragraph 14 that claims 60, 61, and 65 would contain allowable subject matter. It is believed that the amended claims, as discussed below, address all grounds for claim objections and rejection. Claims 62 and 63 have been amended in view to added inadvertently omitted materials from the last amendment. Claims 62 and 63 have support from figures 9A and 9E, and thus do not represent new subject. Also, as described below, claims 62 and 63 depend from an allowable independent claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §112

In response to the rejection under 35 USC §112, as contained in paragraphs 9-10 of the Office action, the Applicants have amended the claims to provide greater structure, as needed to better understand the ordering of the claimed steps. Accordingly, it is believed that this ground for rejection has been overcome.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §101

In response to the rejection of the claims 51-68 under 35 USC §101, as contained in paragraph 11 of the Office action, the Applicants, using the assistance and recommendations from various representatives of the Patent and Trademark Office, have amended the claims to clearly limit the scope of the present invention to technical nature. Accordingly, it is believed that this ground for rejection has been overcome.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102

In paragraphs 12-13, the Office action rejected claims 51-59, 66-71 under 35 USC §102(b). As referenced above, the Office action indicated in paragraph 14 that claims 60, 61, and 65 would contain allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants have amended independent claims 51, 66, and 69 to include all limitations from claim 61 (which depended from claim 58). Accordingly, it is believed that 51, 66, and 69 represent allowable subject matter and the remaining claims depending therefrom would likewise embody allowable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully requested that the rejections set forth in the Office Action be withdrawn. All pending claims are allowable over the art of record, and the application is submitted to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and a timely Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested.

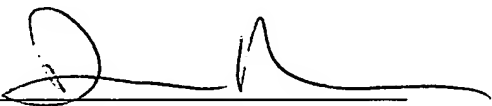
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Reply to Office Action dated September 30, 2003

In the event that an appropriate fee amount is not enclosed by check for fees associated with new claims, an extension of time or an Information Disclosure Statement, fees that may be due, please charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayments to deposit account no. 50-1349.

Finally, in the event that the Examiner considers certain currently rejected claims to be allowable over the prior art and feels that informal discussion would be helpful in progressing the current application toward allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

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